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UNCLAS BOGOTA 004128

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PREL ECON PTER SNAR CO PE

SUBJECT: PERU'S PRESIDENT TOLEDO VISITS COLOMBIA

¶1. Summary: Border security and economic cooperation topped the agenda when Peruvian President Alejandro Toledo made a two-day visit to Colombia April 15-17. Toledo signed a 35-point Joint Declaration with President Alvaro Uribe. The Declaration called for: cooperation and coordination between GOC and GOP teams in FTA negotiations with the U.S.; increased bilateral trade; and enhanced exchange of information and military cooperation along the border to combat narco-terrorism and arms trafficking. The Declaration expressed Peru's support for Uribe's Democratic Security Policy, and reiterated Colombia's support for Peru's candidacy for the UN Security Council. End summary.

¶2. President Alejandro Toledo made the first Peruvian state visit to Colombia in a decade. The outcome was a 35 point Joint Declaration (emailed to WHA/AND) that reaffirmed Peru's support of President Uribe's Democratic Security Policy; reiterated Colombia's support for Peru's candidacy as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in 2006-2007; and emphasized commerce, security, and development of the border area.

International Financial Institutions Relations

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¶3. The Presidents agreed to call on the IMF to give more attention to regional concerns regarding public investment. They stressed the distinction between public investment and current expenditures, and requested that these should be treated differently, in accordance with the statement adopted by the March meeting of the Governors of the Inter-American Bank, in support of economic growth and social development.

Teams Will Cooperate in Negotiating FTA with U.S.

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¶4. The Joint Declaration calls for cooperation between the two countries in negotiating FTAs with the U.S. The GOC MFA's Coordinator for Latin America and the Caribbean subsequently explained this to mean information sharing.

Border Security, Combating the Traffic in Drugs and Arms

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¶5. The countries will continue to share information regarding the traffic of arms and drugs across their border. The Presidents underscored the importance of the tripartite defense agreement between Brazil, Peru, and Colombia to combat crime along their riverine borders. A joint Peru-Colombia commission on drugs will meet May 12-13 in Bogota to evaluate and develop joint methods to combat the traffic in drugs and chemical precursors. The two countries will share information on alternative development and the GOC's program of civilian rangers to protect forests from illicit cultivation.

An Amicable Visit

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¶6. The GOC's coordinator for the visit noted that Toledo's formal statement of support for Uribe's Democratic Security Policy set the tone for an amicable visit. The Joint Declaration made no mention of recent media reports that the FARC is buying armaments from Peruvian Army arsenals. Extradition between the two countries was not included in the Declaration, but an informal agreement was reached to update and implement existing extradition agreements.

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